DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 203 854 IR 009 431

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TITLE Report on Preparation of a Bibliography of Metropolitan Toronto Library Holdings in and about Inuktitut.
PUB DATE Apr 80
NOTE 17p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *American Indian Languages; *Bibliographies; Books; *Eskimo Aleut Languages; Foreign Countries; *Library Collections; Methods; Public Libraries
IDENTIFIERS *Inupiaq (Language); Toronto Public Library (Canada)

ABSTRACT

This report describes the procedures involved in the author's project to produce a bibliography of materials written in and about Inuktitut (the language of the Inuit Eskimo) which are held in the Metropolitan Toronto Library. The author's task orientation and methodology are detailed. (FM)

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ED203854

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REPORT ON PREPARATION OF A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO LIBRARY HOLDINGS IN AND ABOUT INUKTITUT

by

Mary Love

This report has been prepared for the Metropolitan Toronto Library, under the supervision of Barry Edwards in partial fulfillment of the requirements for course LIB 2005 Directed Field Work-Public Libraries: Administrative Practice, Professor : L.G. Denis

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April 1980

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Objective of this Directed Field Work project

The object of this project was to produce, along with the supervisor, Barry Edwards, librarian at the Metro Central Library's Languages Centre, a bibliography of the library's holdings in Inuktitut (the language of the Inuit). In the past only materials to be found in the Languages Centre itself were included in such bibliographies, but now an attempt is being made to enlarge the scope to cover materials found in other departments, including uncatalogued materials. The scope stops at this library's doors and does not attempt to include materials found in other collections.

Orientation Given the Student

As the supervisor for this project was to be on holiday during its first week, the student was taken around to the different departments and introduced to the different people she would need to contact in the course of the project. These departments were: Canadian History, History, Cataloging and Order, and of course the Languages Centre itself. A list of these people's names was left for the student and included their telephone numbers.

The task orientation was, of course, bewildering, as such things always are, but enough was retained for the student to know where to search for items to include in the bibliography. A copy of an earlier bibliography on Indian Languages of North America was left for the student to compare her work with, and along with this a checklist of places to look for items and a checklist of things to include in the annotations, such as language code (in this case, ESK). These guides were helpful and kept panic away.

Place of Work

Space is a problem in Metro Central, as in some theatres which are more comfortable for the patrons than for the workers. This student was obliged to work all over the library in order to look at items in other departments, but she also shared the supervisor's desk when possible, or worked in the open stacks, expecially in the morning when the tables there were not used much by the public. A large table just inside the Languages Centre staff area was very useful for working together with the supervisor, and did not seem to be in great demand.

Methodology

This was partly determined by the supervisor's instructions and by the example of the bibliography which he had prepared on languages of Indians in North America. Facing a huge library like Metro Central without these guidelines would have been daunting as the student was totally unfamiliar with the subject in hand at the start of the project. It was calming, then, on the first day, to take out the stock cards of the Languages Centre's holdings in and about Inuktitut, and photocopy them. This was done as economically as possible, with the result that the slips which emerged after cutting were not all the same size. This was solved, and the slips strengthened for service by glueing the slips onto cards. The cards were then arranged by their Dewey order, and put in a filing box.

Once this procedure had been set up, the student had to decide whether to find and annotate the items indicated by these cards, or to proceed on to other locations, for example, the Allocation drawer and the Order department.[4] It seemed best to try finishing

the task begun by the photocopying as this would give more sense of stability at this juncture than would tearing all over the library. A steady length of time spent looking at materials in the collection would make further searching and communication with the supervisor more informed.

Taking the cards along, the student went to the stacks on the fifth floor upper level and luckily found a kick stool on which to sit. Pencils were generally used for this project in case of errors, so that a pencil sharpener must always be tucked away in one's clothes. Taking the cards by Dewey order the student checked to see that each item was indeed there before taking it out of the stacks. There were about thirty items in this batch, and only one (later explained by an Allocations card) was missing. As even half this number of items was hefty, many of the books being fat and heavy, the open spaces of the library seemed the best place to begin the annotations.

The earliest books in or about Inuktitut were written by Moravian missionaries around the turn of the century, either for fellow missionaries, or, in their terms, for the spiritual well being of the Inuit. The problems in preparing annotations for these works were of a linguistic nature as the student was not familiar with some of the terms used on the titles and forewords and often, especially in these first days, had to peruse the book to be able to make a brief note of its content. The student's knowledge of Ancient Greek was some help when the authors spoke of "glottals" and other wonders. A peculiar twist was the use of the words "infixes" and "afixes" to describe the Inuktitut "prefixes" and "suffixes".

Dialect was always to be noticed, and this is a complex and

interesting question which the student does not pretend to have bottomed, although she tried to deal with it within the scope of the annotations. One difficulty is that people who speak a dialect think of it in local terms, naming it, for example, Rankin Inlet dialect, whereas people with a view of the whole Arctic region think of the dialects in larger groups whose names do not necessarily refer to places. This makes confusion easy and "proper" identification hard. Sometimes more recent works incidentally explained curious things which had not been understood in the earlier works.

The annotations had to have the usual things such as: language code (ESK, although at some later date this might change to INU for Inuit), Dewey number, author, title and imprint information, and an indication of the form of the item, including illustrations, but they also had to have details particular to their nature, such as dialect. Many of the works are at least bilingual; the combinations can be, for example, French, syllabic Inuktitut (which uses shapes such as Δ to record syllables) and English; or syllabic Inuktitut, romanized script Inuktitut where the syllables have been transliterated, and English, or perhaps German or Danish, as these were the languages of some explorer-missionaries in past times. It was an easier task to determine these distinctions than those of dialect.

Annotating this first half of the Languages Centre's book stock took a day and a half. Once done, the student checked to see that the other half of the(stack)collection as represented by the cards was also intact, which it was. These cards were then put together with an elastic and marked "Found in L.C. Stacks but not yet Annotated", whereas those already annotated were banded

together and appropriately labelled.

After this stock-taking, the Allocation drawer and the Order catalogue, as well as other places in the Stock catalogue where cards are not supposed to be present but sometimes are were checked. One item was found in the Allocation drawer which had been sent to the Gifts and Exchanges Department. A dozen slips were found under "Eskimo" in the Order catalogue, and these were taken out after authorization from a senior member of staff. No misplaced cards were found at this time in the Stock catalogue. The Order slips were put together and filed at the front of the box where they would not be missed.

The Languages Centre catalogue is divided by language, and was now searched to see whether any items not covered by the stock cards and the stacks had ever been catalogued. The only items of this description were those from the Audio department, of which there were several. There are no Inuktitut books on the open shelves of the department.

As there were not many Audio items the necessary bibliographic details were copied and the resulting cards set aside for later annotation. The cards were checked with the Audio catalogue in the Audio area itself and there was agreement between the two catalogues.

Having investigated the holdings of the Languages Centre and annotated a portion thereof, the student proceeded to the Bibliographic Centre of the library, armed with pencils and cards. The Subject Catalogue was checked first under "Eskimo", which yielded several titles from Social Sciences, History, and Canadian History, including the Baldwin Room and a few periodicals, all amounting to twenty titles. One volume not found in the Languages

Centre catalogue was entered under "Eskimo" in the main subject catalogue. This may be because it is a Russian-Eskimo dictionary which was entered under the Russian language in the Languages Centre catalogue.

The twenty items were copied down with sufficient detail in order to fill in the departments' request forms and banded together under the heading "Location Known but not yet Verified".

While in the Bibliographic Centre the student sought out individual authors and titles which had been mentioned in the literature so far perused in the hope of finding some of these items in the various departments of the library. Several books and periodicals were found in this way and added to the cards. Some of the items sought are fairly recent and will probably not arrive at the library for the long process of cataloging for some time because of the great distances involved.

The last preliminary step was to visit the Order and Cataloging shelves in the technical services area of the library, which is spacious. There the student spoke with her contact in the Order Department and was shown the Inuktitut books which had arrived since the orientation tour of April 9. There were several piles of these, and order forms to go with them, including a letter about items lost in the mail. Most of the items on order in the Languages Centre had arrived in this shipment, which was made up of booklets, some of them readers for children and some traditional stories. This shipment proved most interesting later on in the project; at this point, however, the student simply arranged to use the books in the Order Department, lest they be lost upstairs, and to sit in an unassigned desk on the following work day, Monday, April 21.

Monday saw the return of supervisor Barry Edwards who looked over the student's work and asked if she felt progess had been

satisfactory so far.

Supervisor and student visited the Order Department on the Monday of the second week of the project. While Mr. Edwards discussed the order which had gone astray and a few cataloging matters, the student made her annotation for a beautiful book of songs of the Copper Inuit which had just been located on the shelf where Inuktitut books await cataloging.

A short tour of some of the further recesses of the huge technical services area followed as Mr. Edwards tracked down an encyclopaedia which was still on order although it had actually arrived.

The student spent the rest of the day annotating the readers which had arrived in the Order Department. Many of these were published by the Alaska Native Language Center in Fairbanks. As always, annotations included the dialect, which was clearly marked in some cases, and hard to define in others. An example of the latter is the set of readers described as being in St. Lawrence Island Yupik. St. Lawrence Island is off the coast of Alaska, just south of the Bering Strait and east of the International Date Line. It is also very close to the eastern tip of Siberia, hence the other "local" name for this dialect, Siberian Yupik. The name chosen by the Inuit Cultural Institute in 1977 for this area's dialect is "Pacific", but these names take time to become familiar among the people as they have had their own names for their more particular local dialects.

Hardly any of the booklets which are being so admirably published take into account the need for precision and standard bibliographic entry which the library profession feels is its solemn duty. The title page often gives conflicting information as to principal responsibility, place and date of publication

and there is often discrepancy between this information and that on the cover, especially as concerns title. This is a puzzle precisely because those who published the booklets do not conform to standards and yet one wants to convey the bibliographic detail in the order of importance which it actually held in the production of the book. Certainly English translations given along with the Inuktitut information would help these booklets to circulate more freely and thus increase knowledge of Inuktitut. This compromise has been made by some publishers, and some others may simply not have anticipated the interest in Inuktitut among whites which does exist.

The people who are publishing these readers and traditional stories are to be commended for beginning a written tradition of Inuktitut literature. Many of the stories have been recorded during actual tellings of them, and then transcribed from tape as an extension of the long oral history of the Inuit. Others have been written down by Inuit who know the new Roman script Inuktitut, and by those who still prefer syllabic Inuktitut. The illustrations of these tales are often works of art which tell their own story with great economy of line and often humour.

A week after this trip to the Order Department, supervisor and student returned there because the missing volumes in the last shipment had arrived. Somehow, the whole order had been put through again, perhaps because of time lags in communication. The job in hand now was to find out which volumes were duplicated and whether the whole shipment was intact. The floor seemed the best place to sort through the confusion which the five dialectic groups presented; (the best way to be sure which dialect an item

was written in was to check through the order list to see which dialect it was under there, and it was fortunate that this list existed as otherwise the title-page of each of forty items would have had to be consulted, and this would have been even more time-consuming).

Once the new shipment had been laid out in the order of the list and by dialect, the supervisor and student sat and went through the list again, putting a second tick against duplicated titles and totalling the number of duplicates for each dialect. This was a good way of learning to recognize the booklets. One book had only its cover left after its long journey, so it will no doubt be reordered a third time.

The two orders were kept separate and their contents and the number of duplicates which the second shipment contained were marked on slips of paper held by the elastics which kept the dialect groups together.

The student stayed behind to annotate the half dozen new items, among them a recipe book from St. Lawrence Island.

There was some doubt as to whether the duplicate shipment items would be kept by the library, but the decision was to do so. The student was asked (a week after the last expedition to the Order Department) to put the duplicates together so that they could proceed through the various stages of preparation. Again the floor was used, and the task was easier this time because the student was more familiar with the titles and looks of the covers. It would have taken someone from the Order Department longer to do this task for that simple reason.

This part of the collecting having been done except for the assigning of a classification number pending full cataloging,

the student began to follow up the items located in the main subject and author-title catalogue. Only one of these, a book on Labrador Inuit place names, was missing, and perhaps it is only misplaced. This must be checked again before it is included or excluded from the bibliography. Half a dozen items from the Social Sciences collection were verified by that department's catalogue, slips filled out, as always, and the books retrieved from the closed stacks. Most of these books were catechism items; they are included because they span several dialects and are examples of syllabic Inuktitut and English translations. Many of them also have treatises on the language and its possible origin. These books document the immense influence of missionaries on the language of the Inuit as they were the first to want to record it, in order to send back reports to those who might follow in their wake.

The Canadian History department is naturally the greatest source of Inuktitut materials besides the Languages Centre. An ongoing part of the Inuktitut student's involvement should be the reading of periodicals such as the annual reports of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. The periodical titles had been gathered from other reading and from the subject catalogue, and those current are kept on the open shelves. Inuktitut materials in the Canadian History department are characterized by having many different parts and lists to them, which makes annotation time-consuming. Many of the books and periodicals are also absorbing and some are charming period pieces, so that time can pass by very quickly without much to show for it on the surface.

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The Baldwin Room of the Canadian History department has its own catalogue; this was very fortunate, as none of the seven sought items had any English translations of title or bibliographic

detail. Having requested the books, the student was obliged simply to go back to the catalogue and copy the bibliographic details from it. Some of these originally came from James Constantine Pilling's Bibliography of the Eskimo Language (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1887), which will certainly be an important item in the bibliography being prepared at present.

There are half a dozen items to be annotated and included from the Audio department. This is one of the tasks still to be completed and will be done when the last twenty-five items from the Languages Centre are dealt with. No problems are foreseen with this part of the collection of Inuktitut materials. The Audio items are cassettes for teaching certain dialects, and all have accompanying material which will be included in the annotation. No Inuktitut periodicals are found on the open stacks, but the Languages Centre has a complete run of Inuktitun and its predecessor Inuttituut (government publications) and an incomplete run of Ajurnarmat (Eskimo Point, N.W.T.: Inuit Cultural Institute, 1977-).

It was lucky that the most challenging part of the project (to date, as the student has agreed to stay until the bibliography itself is ready and produced) came at the end. This took the form of a box by the supervisor's desk which he stated had remained untouched due to pressure of other work for a year. The contents of the box were not unlike those of Pandora, although they came from the Department of Education for the Northwest Territories in Yellowknife. The material included traditional stories, illustrated treatises on the everyday life of the Inuit ("the real people"),

books whose main value was ascribed to their artwork, and school curriculum materials.

Place, agent and date of publication were not a problem in this case, but titles and to some extent authors were, although this turned out to be a pleasant enough problem.

One had to remember that the library rules which southerners believe in so strongly are not practised everywhere; one could fall into the trap of thinking that an item was an utter enigma, having only syllabic Inuktitut on its cover and title page when in fact there was some bibliographic detail given on the very last page of the work.

The responsibility which each person had in the book is often stated very casually, rather than in the standard terms of the southern publishing-library world. One had to use the words of the people involved rather than try to guess whether "... who got the drawings" meant that this was the compiler, in southern terms.

Although the supervisor and student were fairly confident that they had correctly translated the title Nunami as "In the Country" (because of earlier knowledge on the former's part and corroborative use of the materials at hand by the latter), it was thought best not to risk misrepresenting the work, and a more descriptive annotation than usual was taken to offset the complete lack of any title information which could be grasped with certainty.

In a few cases, there was no credit given to an illustrator on the title page, but the artist's name was found on each drawing. This had to be mentioned according to the rules of descriptive bibliography; learning the new rules has been and will continue to be a useful part of this project for the student.

Once or twice an author or illustrator's name had slight differences in Roman orthography from book to book, and this had to be mentioned.

As always, the scope of the works in dialectic terms had to be ascertained and stated, and also the combinations of language used. Many of the government publications have English, as one might expect, but some have only syllabic Inuktitut, and some are either bilingual (usually English and syllabic Inuktitut) or trilingual, adding Roman orthography.

The works which gave title page information only in syllabic Inuktitut were of course the heart of the matter, as they had to be transliterated into Romanized orthography in order to be entered eventually into the Languages Centre catalogue. This process of transliterating was completely new to the student, but not to the supervisor. Both were glad of crib sheets, however; the student could not have done any of this part without the Syllabic Resource Book (Yellowknife, N.W.T.: Linguistic Programmes Division, Dept. of Education, Govt. of the N.W.T., 1979). It has a chart of all the syllabic characters and finals (the latter are smaller characters which only stand for one Roman letter, not two as the former do). and also has word lists arranged by syllabic character. These lists give the Romanized equivalent of the syllabics, and English equivalents too. This work is a revision of a wordbook originally for use in Keewatin District schools around Hudson Bay, but it hopes to help the student with other dialects as well.

If there were someone to whom Mr. Edwards of the Languages Centre in Metro Central Library could turn for translation of such transliterations as were done for this project, then an English entry could be made as well as a Romanized script Inuktitut entry in the case of title main entries. The transliteration work is

most enjoyable and proficiency would come with practice; it also helps the non-native speaker to appreciate the syllabic Inuktitut, but it would be an asset to have English translations so that more people could discover these valuable works.

The student hopes to have conveyed the richness of the Metro Central Library's Inuktitut collection and the complexity of the challenges it gives the bibliographer.

As stated, the bibliography itself has not yet been produced, but most of the spadework has been done, leaving mainly the final checking of bibliographic form against the standards followed by the library world. This means, in raw data, that one hundred and forty items have been located and annotated, and that thirty more have been located, but not yet annotated. The bibliography should be ready by the end of May, 1980, and will be approximately forty pages long.

The benefits to the student from this project have been many. The experience of the life behind the scenes of a great library will be remembered and perhaps used in future working situations; the bibliographic work with the main and department catalogues has given the student needed familiarity with the procedures involved; the completion of the bibliography will give a lasting impression of the AACR II rules for entries, as the bibliography must in great measure reflect the library's catalogues; the student has improved her grasp of Arctic geography significantly; a start was made in the acquisition of Inuktitut syllabics, which may or may not be continued; in a public or academic library she could be of some use to students of Inuktitut, if she keeps up this new interest;

These are all useful, practical things, some of which will be lost without painstaking practice, but the impressions of the Inuit and the people who have lived in their land, their faces and their drawings, will stay much longer.